

SBA's 50th Anniversary

The year 2003 is a great milestone for the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA); it is our 50th Anniversary.

This milestone presents us with an opportunity to celebrate the incredible contributions that small businesses have made to this great Nation.

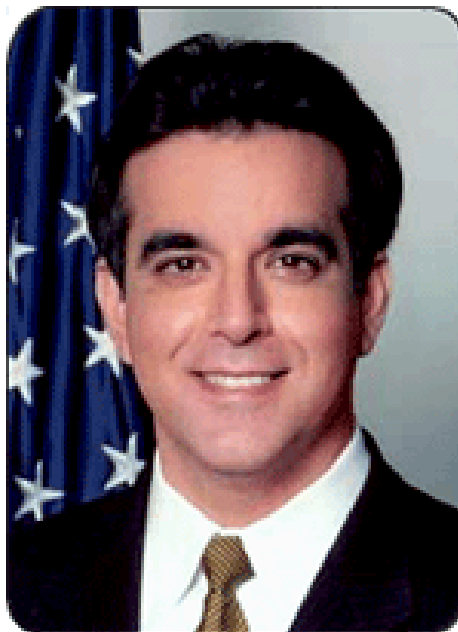
Since the founding of our country, small businesses have contributed immeasurably to our progress and economic strength. Small business is an enduring symbol of the American Dream.

For the last 50 years, the SBA has played a vital role in ensuring that the door to the American Dream is truly open to all entrepreneurs, because the dream should never be limited by access to capital, information or training. In America, an entrepreneur's only limit should be his or her own ideas and desire to succeed.

Please join me in celebrating America's small businesses, and the SBA's commitment to help entrepreneurs keep that American Dream alive and well for today, and for future generations.

Sincerely,

Hector V. Barreto
Administrator



"Please join me in celebrating America's small businesses, and the SBA's commitment to help entrepreneurs keep that American Dream alive and well for today, and for future generations."

**Hector V. Barreto
Administrator**

SBA celebrates Small Business Week, honors local entrepreneurs, advocates

Miami — South Florida's Small Business Person of the Year and Advocates received awards during a May 13th Small Business Week luncheon/conference in West Palm Beach.

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) each year celebrates the spirit of the nation's entrepreneurs and acknowledges their dedication and commitment to success. This year is particularly exciting because it is SBA's 50th year

of helping entrepreneurs start and grow small businesses.

The entrepreneurs and advocates honored at the Small Business Week Awards Program are from across South Florida.

The outstanding business owners and those who provide valuable support hail from Boca Raton, Davie, Hialeah, Miami, Saint Petersburg, Stuart and, Tampa, Fla.

"South Florida's small

Continued on Page 4

Freedom abroad, economic security at home

Nuby J. Fowler
Administrator, Region IV

At home and abroad, America faces new challenges and exciting opportunities. By any measure, we have entered a new era of international relationships. What remains unclear is the degree to which the campaign for freedom in Iraq will affect the domestic marketplace.

There is no denying that we live in a world economy. What happens half-way around the globe has real impact on our efforts to create jobs and stimulate economic growth at home. Economists have offered mixed predictions about what will be the ultimate economic upshot of Operation Iraqi Freedom. What I believe to be certain is that once we have secured a free and democratic Iraq, small business opportunities are sure to follow.

As small business service providers, SBA and its partners must be ready to help meet the needs of our returning military. Not only for the small business owners who

Continued on Page 10

How well do you know SBA?

1. Which President signed legislation creating SBA?
 - a. Hoover
 - b. Truman
 - c. Eisenhower
2. What are the names of the House and Senate Appropriations Sub-Committees responsible for SBA's annual spending bill?
 - a. The Small Business Committee
 - b. Commerce, State and Justice and the Judiciary
 - c. Committee on SBA
3. In FY 2002, SBA backed
 - a. 57,220 loans for \$14 billion
 - b. 27,340 loans for \$8 billion
 - c. 17, 657 loans for \$5 billion

Answers on page 7.

We're celebrating 50 years, changing our strategy

SBAExpress Loan Programs attracts savvy lenders

Francisco "Pancho" A. Marrero
District Director

SBA is celebrating 50 years of helping entrepreneurs across the country succeed. During this time the Agency has evolved in response to the ever-changing needs of America's small businesses. The South Florida District Office (SFDO) is leading an initiative to revolutionize the

"The 'Express' portfolio maximizes lender benefit and increases access to capital for small business owners."

-- Francisco A. Marrero

We are creating innovative outreach practices to serve each of our customers according to their particular needs. We no longer are satisfied with "business as usual." We are dedicated to establishing customer-centered practices and results-driven procedures – essentially transforming everything we do to achieve customer satisfaction.

During the Agency's half-century existence, it has become well-known as a pathway to business success. Our track record is remarkable; however, it is time to retool the way we do business because the marketplace has changed. The SBA's products and practices must remain relevant to our core customers. In response to their changing needs, we are undertaking a bold initiative at the district level to reduce as much as possible, the back-room operations such as loan guaranty processing and servicing, and liquidation activities.

Guaranty processing is being centralized and current loan files are being shipped to servicing and

liquidation centers in Arkansas and California. The transfer of these processes allows us to engage more of our staff in activities that inform our customers about the many advantages and the long-term value of an SBA relationship.

On the loan guaranty processing side, there is an



Francisco A. "Pancho" Marrero

enormous effort on the part of business savvy lenders to increase their profits by centering their SBA activity under what I believe are the Agency's best programs to-date: SBAExpress, ExportExpress, and CommunityExpress.

The practical and lender-friendly features of these programs are the reasons so many are earning increased dividends through SBA. The programs were created in response to the needs the lending community communicated to SBA.

The "Express" feature allows the lender to close a deal in a remarkably short time. Business customers appreciate the responsiveness because speed is critical in business transactions today. Transaction speed maximizes lender benefit and increases access to capital for small business owners.

Lenders conference, awards luncheon set for November in Miami

The South Florida District 3rd Annual Lenders Awards event is planned for Nov. 12 at the Hilton Doubletree Hotel in the Coconut Grove area of Miami, Fla.

SBA-backed financial assistance to small business owners in South Florida, at the end of the Fiscal Year 2003's third quarter, is outpacing last year's activity by 92 percent.

The Lenders Awards program honors underwriting activity by SBA lenders in several categories.

This year, the event includes a morning training session for Certified and Preferred Lender Program participants and certified development company staff. City of Miami Mayor Manuel A. Diaz is the luncheon keynote speaker.

More event details will be provided in the coming months.



The South Florida District Update is published quarterly by the U.S. Small Business Administration's South Florida District Office and is distributed to elected officials, lenders, chambers of commerce and other community resource partners.

Please send address changes to: U.S. Small Business Administration, South Florida District Office, 100 South Biscayne Blvd., 7th floor, Miami, Florida 33131-2011

District Director

Francisco "Pancho" A. Marrero

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SFDO Value Proposition

SBA's South Florida District Office, committed to high quality customer service, offers free comprehensive training and counseling through its Resource Partners as well as federal contracting assistance and an array of financial products and services which help entrepreneurs and small business owners successfully meet their managerial and financial needs.

*The South Florida District Value Statement was written by
Althea A. Harris,
Marketing Executive*

SFDO's John Dunn receives advocate award from SBA lenders Group

Miami – John N. Dunn, Jr., Chief of Finance at the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) South Florida District Office in Miami received the 2003 Small Business Advocate of the Year Award from the South Florida SBA



John N. Dunn, Jr.

Lenders Group. The award was presented during a ceremony at the 1st annual South Florida SBA Lenders and Partners

Golf outing hosted by SCORE — Counselors to America's Small Business. Over 80 lenders and economic development partners participated in the event that took place at PGA National Resort in Palm Beach County.

"In our 10-year history, it is the first time we have recognized an SBA employee for this prestigious award," said Kevin Rafferty, Vice President for Comerica Bank and President of the South Florida SBA Lenders Group. Each year, the advocate award is presented to an individual who uses their professional skills and personal talents to contribute to entrepreneurial and economic development in the South Florida business community.

The Lenders Group promotes the awareness of the SBA's loan guaranty programs and other services that provide access to capital, business counseling, and government contracting opportunities for small business owners.

"John is a champion for economic development," said Rafferty.

Business owners, advocates receive SBA awards

Continued from Page 1

business community is dynamic. It is no surprise to me that the winners of our awards are each stars in their own right," said SBA's South Florida District Director Francisco "Pancho" A. Marrero. "We are acknowledging that entrepreneurship is an exclusive group; not for the faint of heart. Their resolve is responsible for the economic vitality of this Nation.

"There are 25 million small business owners in the United States run by people who take enormous risks daily," said Marrero. "Their commitment and sacrifice warrants the SBA's acknowledgments. They are truly deserving."



ABOVE: Dr. Nancy P. Crews (left) receives the South Florida District's 2003 Small Business Person of the Year Award from Gilbert Colón, SBA's South Florida Deputy District Director. Dr. Crews is President of Custom Manufacturing & Engineering, Inc., of St. Petersburg, Fla.



Financial Services Advocate, Winner, South Florida District and State of Florida, Kaela Lerner, Vice President, Wachovia Bank, Boca Raton, Fla.

The 2003 Small Business Awards Conference and Luncheon was hosted by the City of West Palm Beach, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of West Palm Beach, and the Minority Business Organization.



Devon Green, President of Devon's Heal The World Recycling in Stuart, Fla. is the South Florida District and State of Florida Young Entrepreneur of the Year award winner. She is pictured with SBA's South Florida Deputy District Director, Gilbert Colón.

Award winners not pictured

Small Business Person of the Year
1st Runner-up, South Florida
Randy M. Feldman, CEO, Feldman Orthodontics, Tampa, Fla.

Exporter of the Year
South Florida, District, State of Florida and Region IV
Pavel Rodnevski, President of United Forward, Inc., Boca Raton, Fla.

Financial Services Advocate
1st Runner-up, South Florida
Richard S. Von Minden, Vice President, Temecula Valley Bank, Davie, Fla.

Journalist of the Year
South Florida District, State of Florida
Jane A. Meinhardt, Staff Writer, Tampa Bay Business Journal, Tampa, Fla.



Minority Small Business Advocate, Winner, South Florida District, Jacques R. Laroche, Founder & Chairman, UCOMB of South Dade, Inc., Miami, Fla.

Photos by Thaddeus Hosley

SBAExpress is simplicity

Changes begun a year ago to the SBAExpress loan program have significantly expanded the number of lenders participating in the program and increased access to capital for small businesses in South Florida, according to Francisco "Pancho" A. Marrero, District Director at the U.S. Small Business Administration's South Florida

SBA, partners launch national procurement match-making initiative

Already called the largest small business contracting initiative in U.S. Small Business Administration history, the SBA and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with Hewlett Packard (HP), launched the nationwide Business Matchmaking Program in Orlando, Fla. on March 4 and 5.

SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto, a former small businessman and well-known champion of small business who directs the agency's delivery of financial and business development programs to small businesses, was the keynote speaker at a March 5 luncheon.

As the first stop on a multi-city tour planned through 2004, the Business Matchmaking program in Orlando paired small businesses with federal, state, and local government agencies and private companies who have actual contracts for products and services.

The program will make billions of dollars available in procurement contracts to small businesses over the course of the tour. The federal government annually spends more than \$200 billion for products and services, and the government's statutory goal is to have at least \$46 billion go to small businesses.

District Office in Miami, Fla.

The program modifications now allow an estimated 2,400 lenders already delivering SBA loan products across the country to participate in the SBA Program. In all of FY 2002, 573 of 1,854 loan guaranties approved were under the SBAExpress Loan Program, representing 31 percent. Through the end of the third quarter, ending June 30, 1,324 of 2,176 have been approved representing 61 percent are under the program, Marrero said.

The program is now open to small business lenders who have SBA experiences, but have not participated in the program.

"The new and improved SBAExpress program exemplifies SBA's commitment to innovation, simplification and dedication in responding to its customers and aligning its products closer to the needs of small business," SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto said.

Lenders may use their own forms and processes to approve loans guaranteed by the SBA, a key feature of the program. Minimal paperwork is required for the SBA and the agency generally provides an immediate response on most SBAExpress Applications.

To meet the needs of new and existing small businesses requiring smaller loan products, SBA is offering incentives to lenders to increase the availability of smaller loans, especially loans of \$50,000 or less. The maximum limit of an SBAExpress loan is now \$250,000, up from \$150,000. The program allows more small business borrowers to take advantage of the program's expedited loan process.

"These enhancements are expanding the program's reach in a very significant way," Marrero said. "I encourage lenders, if they are not already participating, to take a good look at it. I think they will like what they see. Simplicity is what this program is all about."

New disaster loan program helps business owners minimize damage

ATLANTA, GA – Small business owners can apply for U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Pre-Disaster Mitigation loans to cover the costs of protecting their business property from damages caused by future disasters.

The Pre-Disaster Mitigation Loan Program is a two-year pilot program—available during fiscal years 2003 and 2004—and supports the goals of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) disaster mitigation program. Small businesses may borrow up to \$50,000 to protect their property by taking specific measures to prevent—or mitigate—disaster damage.

Some examples of mitigation measures include elevating flood-prone structures or retrofitting buildings to lessen the damage caused by earthquakes, high winds and floods. The business' mitigation measure must conform to the goals of the mitigation plan for the community, as defined by FEMA, where the business is located.

Under the pilot program, applications can be accepted during the application filing period only, which begins June 16 and ends July 16, 2003. The interest rate is fixed at 2.953 percent, with loan terms up to a maximum of 30 years.

To download an application and get more information about the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Loan program, visit the Web site at www.sba.gov/disaster.

Applicants can also contact the SBA Disaster Area Office listed below:

Call 1-800-359-2227 if you live in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee or Wisconsin.

SBA financial assistance jumps 92 percent

Jonel F. Hein
Loan Officer

The South Florida District Office (SFDO) is having a banner year in loan guaranty activity. The number of loan guaranties is currently 92 percent above last year's volume at the end of the third quarter, June 30. The South Florida District Office is currently ranked 2nd place among 70 district offices in the nation, providing financial assistance to small businesses, following the Los Angeles District Office. However, at the current pace of production, the SFDO is expecting to be in the running for 1st place by fiscal year end.

A large portion of the loan guaranty activity is now generated through the SBAExpress loan program. The reduced paperwork requirements, elimination of the SBA credit analysis and quick application approval process are all attractive features. The Express program has allowed a few of the district lenders to outperform their competition.

The district staff held SBAExpress training for lenders throughout the year at several sites around the district. An

SBA Management Team Profile

John "Jack" J. Geis

Jack Geis is the Assistant District Director for 8(a) Business Development in the South Florida District Office. He manages and oversees implementation of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) procurement programs in the 24 county area, south of Orlando.

Geis joined the SBA in 1973 as a Management Analyst in the SBA Headquarters in Washington D.C. He joined the South Florida District Office in 1975 as a Management Assistance Officer and has served as the Assistant District Director for Management Assistance. He began his federal career as a Management Analyst in 1970 with the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Prior to federal service, Geis was an Industrial Engineer with both the General Motors Corporation and the Kaiser Aluminum and Chemical Corporation.

He received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Industrial



Jack Geis

Management from the University of Maryland and did his graduate studies at George Washington University. Geis is married to the former, Dr. Tarja Peltto, from Helsinki, Finland. He and his wife enjoy traveling, helping to feed the homeless through their church affiliation, and coaching Little League baseball.

additional training classes is planned in Miami-Dade on July 9th.

"The district staff is proactive in informing lenders about the exciting changes that

are now part of the Express program," said John N. Dunn, Jr., Chief of Finance Division in South Florida. "We have taken our show on the road to hopefully create more opportunities for more lenders. They can use their own collateral policy, they can use their own forms, and in certain circumstances they can request expedited purchases. It's a win-win solution for both the lender and the SBA."

For information on the SBAExpress loan program, please contact John N. Dunn, Jr., Chief of Finance at (305) 536-5521 Ext. 140 or E-mail at john.dunn@sba.gov.

SBAExpress participation status requests go to Rich Taylor, Director of the Sacramento Loan Processing Center, (916) 930-2462 or mail your request to: 501 "I" Street, Suite 12-100, Sacramento, CA 95814.

FY 2003 Top SBA Lenders

Loan Activity as of June 30, 2003

1,932 7(a) Loan Guaranties Approved, \$272.2 Million

Ban of America N.A.	1,157	\$37.9
Capital One Federal Savings Bank	56	\$ 2.6
Union Planters Bank N.A.	53	\$18.0
CIT Small Business Lending Corp.	50	\$25.8
Wachovia Bank N.A.	49	\$25.4
California Bank & Trust	48	\$ 8.8
Business Loan Center, LLC	43	\$26.3
Community Bank of Manatee	42	\$ 8.9
Banco Popular North America	35	\$13.0
Comerica Bank	31	\$15.2

241 504-CDC Loan Guaranties Approved, \$92.0 Million

Florida Business Development Corp.	124	\$32.3
Florida 1 st Finance Capital Corp.	62	\$13.3
St. Petersburg Cert. Development Corp.	27	\$ 8.3

FSBDC Network hosts annual Professional Development Conference

Lynn Douthett

Marketing Manager -- Area 2

The Florida Small Business Development Center (FSBDC) Network's 2003 Annual Professional Development Conference drew nearly 100 managers and analysts from across the state, June 8 -- 11, in Pensacola, Fla.

Each year, the FSBDC Network hosts a continuing education conference in order to keep their members on the cutting edge of economic and entrepreneurial development. Workshops such as Creative Training Tips, Nurturing Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Florida, and Legislative Initiatives Impacting Small Businesses are a sampling of the courses offered to assist in the recertification of FSBDC Network members.

"The conference is a valuable opportunity for us to share best-practices and to cultivate entrepreneurial skills," said Jerry Cartwright, State Director. "The FSBDC Network is a well-trained and dedicated group of professionals who work with thousands of business owners from startups to growing businesses to develop their management abilities and help them find business capital. We are very proud of that."

On June 9, U.S. Small Business Administration, Associate Deputy Administrator of Entrepreneurial Development, Kaaren Johnson Street and Cartwright, presented the 2003 FSBDC Network Performance and local SBA Small Business Advocacy Awards at an awards luncheon during the conference.

Nancy Young, Regional Director for the Florida Atlantic University-SBDC received the Fiscal Year 2002 Top Performer award for SBA loan activity in the South Florida District, and Larry Strain, Regional Director for the University of West Florida-SBDC, received the SBA's Fiscal Year 2002 Top Performer

award in SBA loan activity in the North Florida District. During Fiscal Year 2002, Florida small business owners received SBA loans totaling more than \$24.6 million through the FSBDC Network

The FSBDC Network is a non-profit, statewide network of college and university based centers that link the resources of the federal, state and local governments, as well as the private sector, to provide entrepreneurs with the one-on-one counseling, management training and information they need to prosper and grow in a complex and competitive global economy.

"The SBA and FSBDC Network is a partnership that makes a difference in the economic development of small business growth in Florida," said Francisco "Pancho" A. Marrero, SBA's South Florida District Director.

"Since 1980, more than 780,000 entrepreneurs have been trained and more than \$365 million in capital formation provided in the past eight years. The dollars represent the true impact and value added to our small business communities throughout the state," Cartwright added.

How well did you know SBA?

1. Which President signed legislation creating SBA?
Answer: C. Eisenhower

2. Name of both House and Senate Appropriations Sub-Committees responsible for SBA's annual spending bill?
Answer: B. Commerce, State and Justice and the Judiciary

3. In FY 2002, SBA made . . . (business loans only)
Answer: A. 57,220 loans for \$14 billion

SBA Web site gets facelift, enhancements

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has launched an extensively enhanced Web site designed to make it easier for small business owners and other users to access a wealth of agency resources.

The SBA Web site, at www.sba.gov with more than 50,000 documents, is one of the most effective resources the agency has to reach potential and current small business owners. In South Florida you can access local information at www.sba.gov/sofl. The site

receives more than 1.2 million visits weekly, the most frequently visited pages being *Starting Your Own Business*, *Financing Your Business* and *How to Write a Business Plan*.

The re-engineered site, underwent widespread cosmetic and structural changes, as well as revisions of content. The changes not only will make navigation easier and more logical, but will give small business users access to a compelling interactive resource for the development and growth of their businesses.

SBA Newsbriefs

504 loan processing moves to California

South Florida District 504 Certified Development Center Loan processing is now handled in the Sacramento Preferred Lender Program processing center. Please send loan applications to: SBA - Sacramento Loan Processing Center, U.S. Federal Courthouse, 501 "I" Street, Suite 12-100, Sacramento, CA 95814. E-mail authorizations to: sacramento504shipping@sba.gov.

The contact persons for loan program and eligibility questions are Terri Bellmore at (916) 930-2475 or Karin Boller at (916) 930-2481. You may also e-mail your questions to: sacramento504@sba.gov.



Lender Training Institute

The SFDO office offers SBA financial assistance program classes to participating SBA lenders at no cost. The courses are held in the district office in Miami. The SFDO training team will come to you providing you can confirm a group of 8 or more people. For course schedule and registration please contact Manny Estevez at (305) 536-5521 Ext. 110 or Jonel Hein at Ext. 117.

Loan Collateral

It is important for SBA loan guaranty packagers to remember that if there are insufficient business assets to secure a loan, and the principals have more than 25 percent equity in their personal residences; the SBA will require those properties to be pledged as collateral to offset the shortfall.

Contract Solicitation

Federal contract solicitations are posted on <http://www.eps.gov/>, along with other types of procurement opportunities that exceed \$25,000. Sole Source 8(a) Business Development Program contract opportunities are not listed on the Web site.

The site is designed to create an environment where entrepreneurship can flourish by providing small businesses with the information they need to succeed, saving taxpayer dollars by ensuring open competition to government contracts, and tearing down regulatory barriers to job creation.

SBA plans 50th anniversary event in August

National recognition of the agency's 50th anniversary kicks off Aug. 1 at The Dwight D. Eisenhower Library and Museum in Abilene, Kan., where the signing of the Small Business Act by President Eisenhower on July 30, 1953 will be commemorated.

SBA's Customer-centered initiative going as planned

Miguel E. Gonzalez
**Chief, Portfolio
Management Division**

The Small Business Administration (SBA) is moving forward into the next phase of its transformation into a streamlined service organization with a customer-centered and result-oriented approach. Beginning in early March of this year, processing of new loan guaranty purchase requests as well as monitoring and liquidation collections of defaulted loans were transferred to the SBA's Liquidation Center located in Santa Ana, Calif.

During the month of May, most of the remaining files currently handled by the South Florida District Office were transferred to the center. While some customer response delays are expected during the initial stages of this transformation, no major problems are anticipated in the long-run.

The SFDO portfolio management team is available to answers questions and assist you during the transition. You may also contact Miguel E. Gonzalez, Chief of the Portfolio Management Division at (305) 536-5521 Ext. 141 or Juan Urbina, loan servicing assistant in the Santa Ana office at (714) 550-9566 Ext. 3332.

The address for written inquiries is: Santa Ana Liquidation Center, U.S. Small Business Administration, 200 West Santa Ana Blvd., Suite 950, Santa Ana, CA 92701, Attention Juan Urbina.

Save the Date!

**National
Entrepreneurial
Conference & Expo
Commemorating SBA's 50th**

Sept. 17 - 19

*Washington Hilton & Towers,
Washington, D.C.*

Billie S. Anderson
Marketing Executive
Women's Business Ownership Representative

SBA assistance targets women business owners

"No business group in America is moving faster or more efficiently than women-owned businesses; they are doing a fantastic job contributing to our economy and creating jobs,"

*-- Hector V. Barreto,
 SBA Administrator*

Women business owners are growing by leaps and bounds across the country and are one of the fastest growing groups of business owners, with a population of 5.4 million (Source U.S. Census 2000).

There are 235,835 women-owned businesses, according to the 1997 U.S. Economic Census Survey within the 24 counties serviced by the South Florida District Office -- Pasco to Brevard, down to Monroe Counties. As of June 30, 586 woman-owned businesses received financing with SBA assistance.

The SBA's Web site for women entrepreneurs can be found at www.onlinewbc.gov, The Online Women's Business Center, is translated into seven languages, English, Spanish, Japanese, Chinese, Russian, Icelandic and Arabic. The Web site includes such topics as, how to find local services, networking, resource partners and other subject material to good business practices. SBA also has a Web-based calendar with the District's small business related events listed at <http://www.sba.gov/fl/south/>, under the Training Calendar icon.

SBA sponsored events are perfect networking opportunities for women business owners. You can compare notes about both good and bad experiences, discuss new ideas and develop strategies to overcome the barriers faced by many women in the business community. SCORE - Counselors to America's Small Business and Small Business Development Centers offer workshops across the district. SBDC and SCORE are both SBA resource partners who are dedicated to sharing with women business owners information about programs and services offered by SBA.

As the South Florida District Office Women's Business Ownership Representative, I am looking forward to your input and working to help you find success.

For information about the SBA programs available to women business owners, contact Billie S. Anderson, Marketing Executive at (305) 536-5521, Ext. 121 or billie.anderson@sba.gov.

Military reservists have 90 days to apply for SBA Economic Injury Loans

WASHINGTON – Small businesses with essential employees returning from active duty in the armed services have 90 days to apply for Military Reservist Economic Injury Disaster Loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration. The filing period ends 90 days after the date the employee or owner is discharged from active duty.

"Americans are grateful for the sacrifices these reservists, some of whom are sole proprietors, have made to support the nation's military effort," said SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto.

"We recognize that long periods of absence for active duty can put an enormous strain on a small business, and these

loans can help reservists weather the challenges involved in keeping the business running."

The MREIDL program provides loans to eligible small businesses to cover operating costs that would have been covered, but cannot be met because an essential employee was called to active duty during a period of military conflict in his or her role as a military reservist.

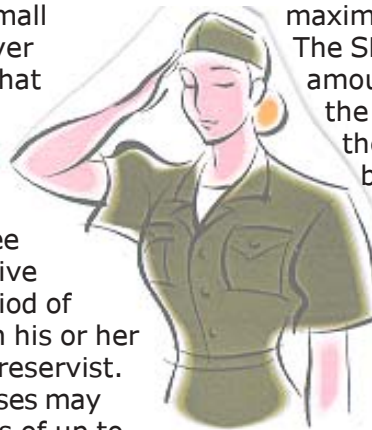
Small businesses may apply for MREIDLs of up to \$1.5 million if they have been financially affected by the loss of a key employee. These working capital loans may be used to pay fixed debts, payroll,

accounts payable, and other bills that cannot otherwise be paid.

The interest rate on these loans is 4 percent or less, with a maximum term of 30 years.

The SBA determines the amount of economic injury, the term of each loan and the payment amount, based on the borrower's financial circumstances.

To download the application, visit the Web site at www.sba.gov/disaster. Businesses can also contact one of the SBA disaster area offices to obtain an MREIDL application. Business owners in South Florida should call 1-800-359-2227.



Freedom abroad ...

Continued from Page 2

were deployed for this action and the many small businesses that employ National Guard and Reserve personnel, but for the prospective new entrepreneurs among their ranks and the businesses that provide the products and services they need.

Through the Military Relief Economic Injury Disaster Loan program, SBA has already provided much needed capital to small businesses impacted by the deployment of owners or critical personnel. The wide scale use of this program serves as a promise that these businesses will continue to operate, create jobs, and provide security to owners and employees alike. I am heartened by the stories of sacrifice by business owners to keep their employees on the job despite lost revenue.

They believe, as I do and as the President does, in the fundamental strength of today's economy and that confidence, hard work and a little sacrifice will payoff big-time in the long-term.

Let's follow their lead and keep up the good work of keeping hometown main streets open for business and positioned to lead the way to economic growth.

Seminar draws interest during Asian-American/Pacific Islander Month

Ilene P. Rubio

Marketing Manager, Area 1

During the month of May 2003 and in celebration of the Asian American/Pacific Islander month, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), South Florida District Office (SFDO) held a seminar in conjunction with the Korean-American Chamber of Commerce of Greater Miami, one of the district office's newest Prequalification Loan Program intermediaries.

The event was held at the Nanay Center, Inc., which is located in North Miami, Fla. and drew the participation of more than 50 people, both aspiring entrepreneurs and existing business owners.

SBA launches E-Business Institute Web site

WASHINGTON – Small business owners can now access an online virtual classroom of business courses, workshops, information resources, learning tools and counseling assistance through the U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) E-Business Institute Web site.

"As America's small business resource, the SBA is committed to offering the best in online educational programs to small business owners," said SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto.



"Our course selection will continue to grow, adding to our small business training, education and information assistance capabilities."

The E-Business Institute is a virtual campus offering free tutorials, workshops and educational resources. It offers a range of online business training and counseling tools to assist entrepreneurs with business start-up, from developing marketing strategies to effective employee management.

It also provides valuable information for existing small business owners. The E-Business Institute is an easy-to-use tool that provides 24-hour access to business courses via the Internet.

The E-Business Institute was designed with small business entrepreneurs in mind to provide interactive business guidance on a range of topics. They can be accessed online at www.sba.gov/training.

The event was honored with the presence of Jane Pak, Deputy Director of Strategic Alliances for the Office of the Administrator for the SBA Headquarters in Washington, D.C. Pak provided the attendees with statistics and accomplishments of the Asian American/Pacific Islander community and spoke of SBA Administrator Barreto's commitment to increase loan activity, counseling services and procurement contracts for this particular market segment. During her presentation, Pak presented the chamber with a White House Proclamation in recognition of its outreach efforts in providing programs of importance to its community and honoring the chamber during Asian-American/

Pacific Islander Month.

Participants were welcomed by Jon S. Kim, President of the Korean-American Chamber of Commerce of Greater Miami. Gilbert Colón, SFDO Deputy District Director, provided an overview of the district office outreach efforts and its pursuit of customer-centered, market-driven approaches. The presentation on SBA programs and services, specifically the SBA loan guaranty programs, criteria, and documentation needs was provided by Ilene P. Rubio, Marketing Manager for Area 1.

Jong S. Lee, the analyst designated by the chamber to serve as the Prequalification Loan Program Intermediary, made a

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8(a) Business Development Program review

Garcilasco Rey-Moran
Business Opportunity
Specialist

The 8(a) Business Development Program continues this year to show strong performance in spite of budget cuts and decreased spending by federal agencies.

Through June 30, firms in the South Florida District have received 166 contracts and modifications totaling \$71.6 million. During April, May and June 77 firms were awarded contracts valued at \$23.4 million.

Traditionally in the 8(a) program, the months of June, July, and August have the strongest contract activity; therefore, more contract activity is expected.

New Firms: Twenty-six new firms are now certified 8(a) participants, reflecting the national trend of a larger 8(a) program portfolio. This has been matched by an aggressive policy on the part of federal procurement offices to identify qualified 8(a) program contractors to be matched with suitable contracting opportunities. Numerous matchmaking events are planned nationwide and many agencies are increasing outreach efforts by conducting seminars and training sessions at different locations.

Congress ends prison firm's preference in DoD contracting

The U.S. Department of Defense can buy furniture, textiles, and other equipment from private sector firms instead of Federal Prison Industries (FPI) under legislation passed recently by Congress.

In a major victory for private companies eager to tap into the federal market, the Defense Authorization Bill stripped FPI, also known as Unicor, of its mandatory source status with the Pentagon. FPI is still the default provider of some products provided to all federal agencies.

The law opens the door to



procurement opportunities for 8(a) and Historically Under-utilized Business Zone (HUBZone) contractors in those industries.

New marketing tool – SBAExchange

The SBAExchange system is a streamlined electronic tool that allows agencies to award simplified acquisitions up to \$100,000 (including micro-purchases) and to make purchases and payments electronically with the Government-wide commercial purchase card.

The SBAExchange is a pilot program worth exploring. Information can be found at www.sbaexchange.com.

Past Performance Information Retrieval System

Past performance is becoming a determining factor in source selection for federal contracts; however, many contractors have difficulties in obtaining their final contractor evaluation after completing a contract and sometimes these evaluations are never conducted. Now, by accessing Past Performance Information Retrieval System at www.ppirs.gov, you can find your performance evaluation and also understand how this information is used and evaluated. This is not only important for contractors with a track record with the U.S. government, but also for those who have not received any contracts.

Troubled small banks hurt small business, say SBA study

WASHINGTON, D.C. – When small banks face adverse conditions smaller businesses suffer greater detrimental performance than their larger counterparts, according to a new study released today. The study also confirms the conventional wisdom that higher interest rates depress lending in general, which leads to lower growth, employment, and payrolls in firms of all sizes.

The study found that increases in SBA guaranteed loans tended to increase output, employment, and payrolls. Moreover, according to *Impact of Tight Money and/or Recessions on Small Business*, SBA programs "acted as an economic stabilizer."

"Small businesses have traditionally relied on bank financing from local banks to a greater extent than their larger counterparts," said Thomas M. Sullivan, Chief Counsel for Advocacy. "So it's no surprise that when small banks sneeze, small firms catch cold. The SBA can be proud of the fact that its loan-guarantees are a buffer during a recession or tight money situation," he said.

Interestingly, the authors found that small bank capital had the largest effect on employment. The effect was about three times that of large banks. The result is that small bank capital is "high-powered" in terms of stimulating employment.

Principal investigator Dr. James Wilcox, Dr. Diana Hancock, and Dr. Joe Peek of PM KeyPoint LLC wrote *Impact of Tight Money and/or Recessions on Small Business* through funding from the Office of Advocacy.

The Office of Advocacy examines the role and status of small business in the economy and independently represents the views of small business to federal agencies, Congress, and the President. It is the source for small business statistics presented in user-friendly formats and it funds research into small business issues.

Visit the Office of Advocacy Web site at www.sba.gov/advo.

Seminar draws interest

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presentation on the program parameters and benefits.

Throughout the SFDO's 24-county area, there are 29,751 Asian-American/Pacific Islander owned businesses, according to the 1997 - 1999 U.S. Economic Census on Minority Owned Business Enterprises.

The highest concentrations of these businesses are located in the counties of Miami-Dade, with 10,397; Broward, with 6,468; Hillsborough, with 3,160; Pinellas, with 2,136; Palm Beach, with 2,076; and Polk, with 1,326.

As of the end of June, there are 133 approved Asian-American/Pacific Islander loans in the district, 7(a), 504 and microloans. The number represents 6 percent of the total Team Loans of 2,213 Total Team loans are described as total minority, women, rural, specially designated area and Microloan Programs.

2003 Small Business Person of the Year

Dr. Nancy P. Crews, Owner CME, Inc.

For five years, Dr. Nancy P. Crews has been at the helm of her company, while she now reports an annual business income of \$7 million at Custom Manufacturing and Engineering, Inc., (CME). She attributes her success to several things.

"I have a strong desire to succeed," she says. "Some people tell me that I have a passion for excellence, and that's what it takes to succeed."

She describes CME as a monitor and control company that also does research and development for the federal government. In addition, CME also builds specialized products to specifications for various government agencies.

Such is the case with the Lantirn Missile. The missile can be used to launch a precision attack on tactical targets at night or in inclement weather. CME produces crucial data-logging modules for the missile using embedded microchip processors.

Dr. Crews is President, founder,



Dr. Nancy P. Crews

and owner of the St. Petersburg, Fla., based company. CME was recently recognized by Deloitte & Touche as a 'Fast 50 Company' in Florida's high-tech corridor. In 1999, the company was recognized by the SBA as a Small Business Innovative Research Tibbetts Award winner in recognition of being a research and design center of excellence.

**U.S. Small Business Administration
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